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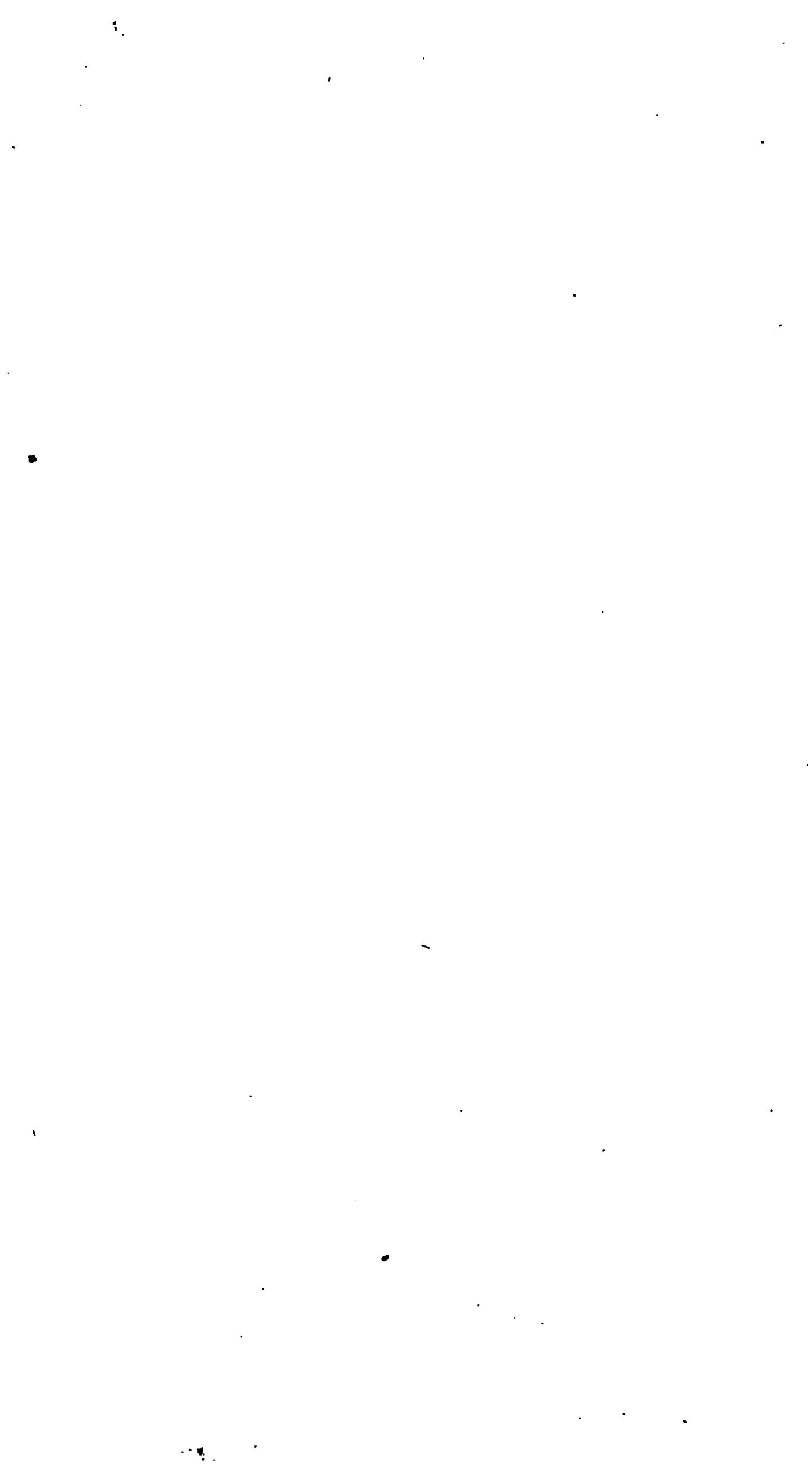
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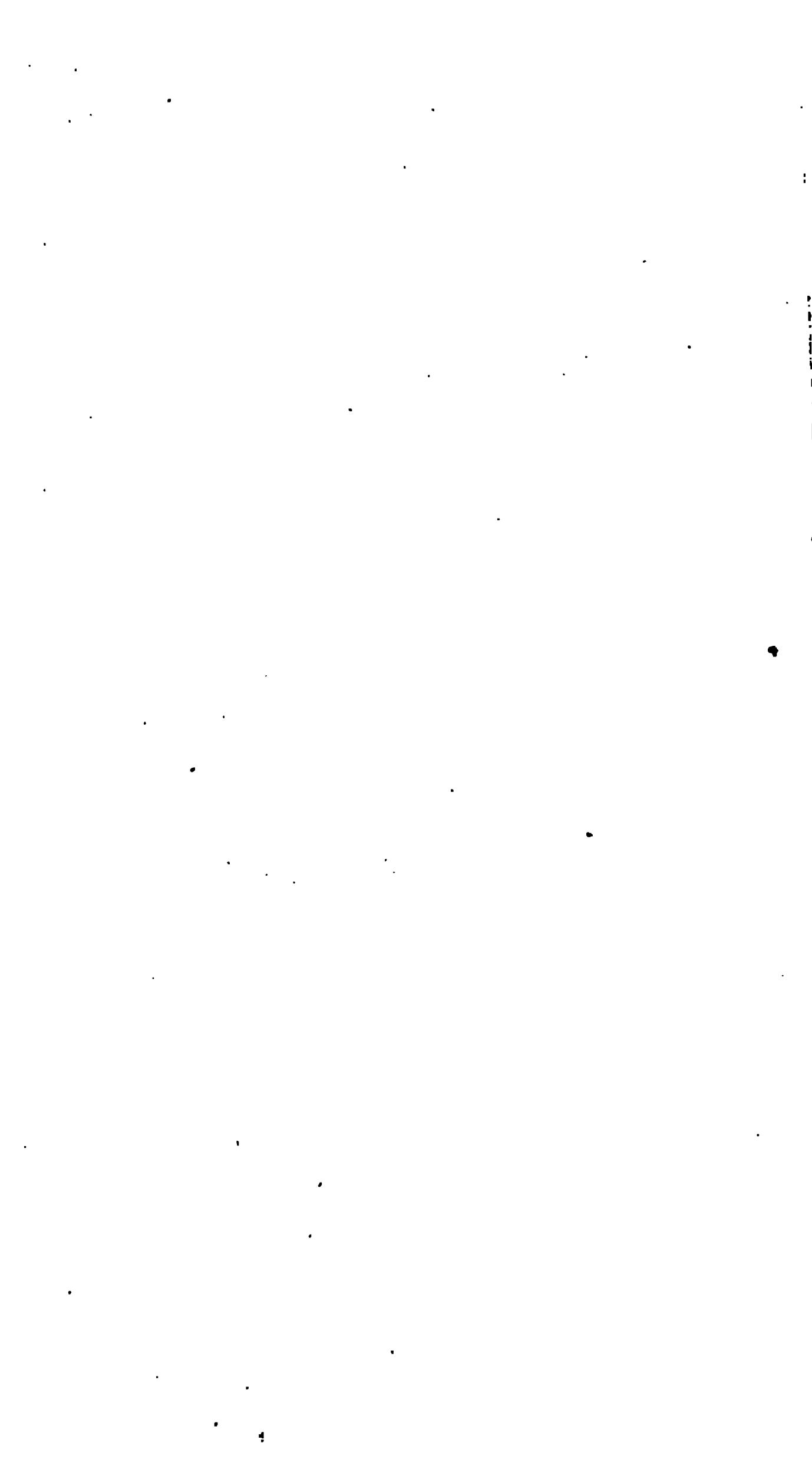
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THE
INTERESTING ADVENTURES
OF A
Hackney Coach,

(AS RELATED BY THE COACHMAN;)



WRITTEN BY

HENRY BEAUCHAMP.



CONTAINING A GREAT VARIETY OF CURIOUS
OCCURRENCES,

TAKEN

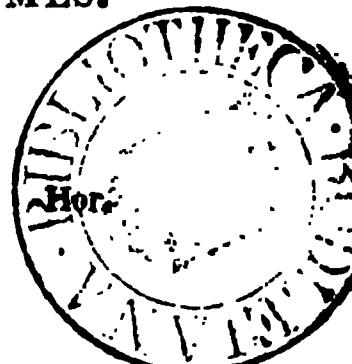
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ridiculum acri,
Fortius ac melius magnas plerumque secat res.



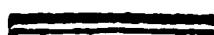
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TO THE

R E A D E R.

IN explanation to some of my readers, who may consider the coachman to have auricular powers beyond those which generally fall to the lot of man, by being able whilst on the box to hear so distinctly the conversation passing in the coach; I think it right to observe, that in addition to the gift which nature has

endowed him with of a very quick sense of hearing, a friend of his, who had a most extraordinary mechanical genius, contrived a tube or pipe between the front glasses of the coach, which accurately conveyed the voice of every one in the coach to the driver, by which means it seldom happened that a word escaped him.

THE Author of that ingenious little work, entitled “the Adventures of a Hackney Coach,” published in the year 1781, not having yet gratified our expectation by the publication of a second volume, I have attempted, though not without a due consciousness of my own inability for such an undertaking, to form a volume of Adventures, but perfectly distinct from the former work, and, should the perusal of my endeavours afford some pleasant hours to my friends, or the remembrance of my little composition beguile the tedious hours of a winter’s evening, I shall then have

reached the summit of my wishes, as I can assure my readers, that my only aim is that of affording delight to my fellow-creatures.

The events which have taken place since the publication of Adventures in the year 1781, I have some reason to flatter myself, will render my work an easy prey to the ravenous claws of a fashionable bookseller, and my selections from the occurrences taken place since that year to the present period, being not less numerous than interesting and instructive, it will not be in my power to complete them within the limits of one volume: but, should fortune smile on my efforts and crown them with proportionate success, I shall then appear before the public with a renewal of my endeavours in a second volume, not a little encouraged by their

fostering support, which will add confidence to my undertaking, and furnish hopes of still longer meriting the approbation of a generous public.

I cannot but be aware that these times are by no means favourable to juvenile performers, whose chief support must consequently rest on the kindness and sympathy of a feeling public ; on the contrary, they are far more adapted to persons more disciplined and mature, whose minds are sufficiently emboldened to bear with calmness or indifference those blasts of criticism, from which not even the most favoured of our modern authors can find a shelter.

Though I cannot acquit myself of boldness in thus presuming to appear before the public, still let me not be charged

*with a crime of too great a magnitude,
that of being an author, nay, rather let
me be denominated a detailer of events,
which may in some degree extenuate the
presumption I should otherwise merit, in
assuming a character far beyond my pow-
ers or inclination.*

The AUTHOR.

London, 1813.

THE
ADVENTURES
OF A
Hackney Coach.

CHAP. I.

AS vulgar minds are apt to be pleased in proportion to the outward beauty of the object in their view, so the splendid appearance and elegant form of the Coach, (and to which by the way it was indebted to its first proprietor the gentleman on Clapham Common,) was the cause of its frequent hire; indeed it was never known

to have any allotted time of ease or cessation from action, but for half a dozen hours at midnight, it will not therefore appear strange that the wheels which had undergone several repairs from time to time should have at length become too weak for their burthen, and the Coach likewise in such a dangerous condition, that a thorough substantial repair, together with new wheels, were essentially requisite e're it could possibly resume its wonted occupation, or action, and again become an useful convenience to the public.

The carriage was therefore sent to an eminent coachmaker's to be repaired and beautified, and has been six months since returned, every way answering the expectations of the honest proprietor, who has without much difficulty procured for it a respectable stand.

The Coach was standing in Oxford-Street about three weeks since, when an elderly lady with her two nieces escorted by a gentleman got in, and desired the coachman to drive to Cheapside; they had scarcely seated themselves when one of the little girls said, in an anxious tone, “pray uncle inform me of the curious circumstance which you said occurred to you a fortnight ago,” “yes my dear,” he replied, and accordingly related the following adventure.

“ I was one day riding on horseback
“ in the neighbourhood of London, and
“ and was suddenly taken extremely ill,
“ having experienced a fall from my horse;
“ I was at a loss what expedient to make
“ use of, at length having managed to
“ tie my steed to a tree, I seated myself
“ on an adjacent bank bewailing my misfor-
“ tunes, of which, from the exposed situ-

“ ation, I was unable to discover the
“ extent; however I was fortunately ob-
“ served by an elderly gentleman, whose
“ house was very little distant from the
“ spot where the accident happened;
“ he quickly came up to the sloping piece
“ of grass on which I was reclining, and
“ accosted me in the kindest manner: I
“ quickly made him acquainted with the
“ accident that had befallen me, and the
“ stranger insisted on my returning to his
“ house to take such refreshment as might
“ be most agreeable: the hospitable offer
“ was accepted by me with heartfelt thanks,
“ and my horse was led to a stable belong-
“ ing to the house by one of the stranger’s
“ servants.

“ On our arrival within doors, his pri-
“ mary object was to be made acquainted
“ with the bruises I had received, and he

“ was rejoiced, as well as myself, to find
“ that no ill consequences were likely
“ to attend any of them ; indeed I found
“ myself so suddenly recovered by what
“ had been externally applied, that I
“ would have immediately quitted the
“ hospitable stranger’s house, had not his
“ kindness peremptorily denied so hasty
“ a departure ; in short he said he could
“ not think of parting with me till after
“ I had joined himself and company at
“ dinner : this gentleman had still retain-
“ the good old hours of dining observed
“ fifty years ago, and we sat down to
“ dine precisely at three o’clock, in com-
“ pany with four other gentlemen who
“ were extremely communicative and
“ pleasant ; I felt thankful that I had
“ sustained my fall (as it happened at
“ all) within a short distance from so
“ hospitable a mansion.

“ We had just finished our fish when I
“ proposed drinking a glass of wine with
“ the generous master of the house, but
“ to my utmost surprise, with a sudden
“ gloom on his countenance, and in a
“ dignified and authoritative tone, and
“ at the same time extending his hand,
“ he answered “ no. ” I was astonished
“ at the singularity of the check, but un-
“ willing to offend, remained silent:
“ though was not, (as I said before), in
“ a little degree surprised at his hasty
“ rejection, as wine is so generally drank
“ at a gentleman’s table.

“ The instant dinner was over, the mas-
ter of the house left the room, when one
of the company addressed me in the fol-
lowing words.

CHAP. II.

“**B**Y what misfortune, sir, have you
“ been unhappily trepanned by that un-
“ feeling man, who has quitted the room?
“ Oh, sir! you will have ample cause
“ to curse the fatal hour that put you
“ in his power; for you have no pros-
“ pect in this world but misery and op-
“ pression; perpetually subject to the
“ capricious humour of the old man,
“ you will remain in this mansion for
“ the rest of your days; your life as
“ mine will become burthensome, and

“ driven to despair, your days will glide
“ on with regret and melancholy in one
“ cold and miserable meanness. This,
“ alas ! has been my lot for fifteen years,
“ and not mine only, but the lot of every
“ one you see here since his arrival at
“ this cursed abode !”

“ The pathetic manner that accompa-
“ nied this cheerless narrative, and the
“ singular behaviour of the old man fil-
“ led my mind with sentiments of hor-
“ ror, and I was lost in stupor for some
“ minutes ; when recovering I exclaimed,
“ by what authority can any man detain
“ me against my will ? I will oppose him
“ by force if necessary.” “ Ah sir ! ” ad-
“ ded a second gentleman, “ you argu-
“ ment is just, but your threats are vain,
“ your attempt would prove futile, and
“ your punishment dreadful.” I replied

that I would endeavour to escape and was rejoined by a third gentleman, who assured me my hopes were groundless, and that in an attempt to gain his liberty three months since, he himself had broken his leg, another said he had injured his arm, and that many had been killed by falls in similar endeavours, that others had suddenly disappeared and had never been heard of: I was about to reply when a servant entered the room and said his master wished to see me; "do not go," said one, "take my advice," said another, "for God's sake don't go."

"The servant told me I had nothing to fear, and he entreating me to follow him, I complied, and found the old gentleman seated at a table covered with a desert and wine; he arose when I entered the room, and asking pardon for the

apparent rudeness he was under the necessity of committing at dinner, informed me that he was a Physician, and devoted his time to the care of insane persons, that those gentlemen who were at the dinner-table, were afflicted with a mental derangement, though they frequently enjoyed lucid intervals, that wine would be very detrimental to them, he therefore never permitted it to be brought in their presence ; "but now," continued he, I "will have the pleasure of drinking a "bottle tête-à-tête with you;" I was perfectly satisfied with this result, and having drank our bottle together, repeated my thanks for the generous master's hospitality and mounted my horse."

The gentleman had just finished this relation, when he, the lady, and their nieces were set down at St. Paul's Church, which they entered, highly de-

lighted with the idea of beholding the rarities in that Cathedral: at first the gentleman had intended keeping the Coach 'till the party was ready to be driven back, but upon second thoughts it was deemed best to hire another at the end of the two hours, which time they had allotted themselves to view the interior of the building, and, above all, to admire the monuments of their illustrious predecessors.

My Coach had not been many minutes empty, before it was called to take two persons who had the appearance of farmers just arrived in London, and which they seemed very anxious to quit, but in order to forget the regions of smoak, (against which they inveighed greatly) as much as in their power, one of them related to the other the following singular circumstance.

CHAP III.

“ABOUT a dozen years ago a gentleman resided at Tonbridge, in Kent, who was possessed of large personal property, as well as some real estates, there were some very large hop grounds belonging to the farm of this gentleman, insomuch that they always occupied a vast number of hands, and not the fewest of them were from London and its environs: it happened that one of these gentry, commonly named trampers, having

picked at this gentleman's garden for some years, had become slightly acquainted with his master, and had without regard to his mean condition, ventured to explain his sentiments with so little reserve, as to convey no other signification than that he should be happy to see the gentleman at his residence in London, at the same time giving him his direction, and closing his invitation with the observation, that if the gentleman would permit his son to marry a hopper's daughter, he should be most proud of the alliance, adding also that her fortune was twenty thousand pounds, he further informed the gentleman that, having spared no expence with regard to her education, he had no doubt that he would find, on an introduction, that she was extremely accomplished, and in his humble opinion by no means deficient in personal attractions.

“ The gentleman was greatly amazed at the proposal of the hopper, who to all external appearance, was not second to the rif-ras of St. Giles’s : however, he told him that a matter of such importance could not be determined on with too little baste, therefore time must be allowed him to consider of it ; but the hopper still pressing his invitation, his master was necessitated to say that he would call on him when he next visited London : the hopper soon afterwards quitted the gentleman’s farm, though not without further solicitations for a speedy interview with his employer in London.

“ The gentleman soon afterwards opened the whole affair to his son, who was thunderstruck at what his father told him, not so much as knowing the man’s face from the rest of the hoppers, but considered

: the whole groupe, from their appearance, as being unable to command more money than what one day's pay made them masters of: and when he reflected on the twenty thousand pounds which was to be his, (in case of his acceding to the proposed marriage), he supposed the man must have been out of his mind, or that he had made up the foregoing only as a pretence for his entering the house for the purpose of pilfering what articles might come in his way: in short, the house in town which he spoke of, and the accomplishments of his daughter were circumstances which rendered the whole affair, in the opinion of both the gentleman and his son, unworthy of the smallest credit: but what the father's surprise was on his being in London you shall be shortly made acquainted with.

“ He had no sooner reached the metropolis, than impulse of the feelings, urged

by not unpardonable curiosity, resolved him immediately to bend his steps towards the house of the gentleman of the picking tribe, to which place he had been so pressingly invited, and it was not long before he arrived there, which was in one of the principal streets in London.

CHAP. IV.

“ HAVING knocked at the door, which was quickly opened by a servant in livery, the country gentleman enquired whether his master was at home, and was answered in the negative, but that he was shortly expected ; accordingly the gentleman agreed to enter, and was ushered into a parlor elegantly furnished, where a young lady was playing on the piano-forte with the accompaniment of her own voice, which was certainly as he thought a pleasing ad-

dition: she rose on the gentleman's entrance, and soon quitting her instrument, talked with uncommon ease and vivacity: a short time afterwards the young lady, taking the opportunity of a pause in the conversation, rang the bell, to inform the coachman that the carriage would not be wanted 'till the evening.

“ The gentleman could hardly believe his eyes for what they saw, nor his ears for what they had just heard; yet notwithstanding he felt a kind of presentiment that this lady must be the intended bride for his son.

“ Whilst he was indulging in these strange ideas, he heard a ring at the bell, and at the same (the parlor being so situated) saw a man, habited as a beggar, en-

ter so distinctly, that he had no doubt from his appearance but that he was the man who had assisted in his hop ground the last autumn, and this was no other than the master of the house, who soon made his entré very fashionably dressed, and after apologizing that he had not been at home on his arrival, expressed the greatest joy at seeing him.

“ Soon afterwards the lady left the room, and the master of the house then asked the gentleman, whether he had given the subject they had before conversed upon his full consideration, and whether his determination was fixed; the gentleman could not help returning thanks for the offer made to his son, but concluded, by observing, that it never could be his intention to marry him to a beggar’s daughter, and at the same time added, that what he had com-

nicated to him in the country had so greatly surprised him, that he was determined on his coming to town to call on him, and perceiving the whole to turn out as was stated, he had only to say it was out of his power ever to see his face again, observing, that an arrant beggar was too detestable a character for the society of any one."

I had not proceeded far on my return to my stand, (after setting down the two farmers), when I was called after by a gentleman of genteel deportment, who bid me draw up to a side door in Bridge-Street, where three females of elderly appearance, with himself got in: "well," said one of them as she entered, "for my part I never was partial to stage or hackney coaches, they are without doubt useful conveniences and ought always to be deemed as such; but as for what the vulgar call junk- a

“etting, or driving through London in a
“hackney coach for pleasure, that is what
“I shall never have strength of mind to
“endure, and as to stages, there are often
“very disagreeable circumstances attend-
“ing those means of conveyance.

“It was but last Christmas-day that I
“went down by the Twickenham stage in-
“side, to spend a few days with my sister
“who lives near that place; I had scarce-
“ly seated myself, when four men of pro-
“digious size presented themselves before
“my astonished eyes; from that moment
“I had a fore-thought of the comfort I
“should experience on my journey in a
“coach only built to contain four persons,
“however, being ever ready to accommo-
“date, and particularly in such emergen-
“cies, after deplored the circumstance of
“our meeting in so confined a situation,

“ I began conversing with them on various
“ subjects, and we had got into pretty good
“ humour when it was about the time of
“ our departure from the inn.

“ I just at that time observed a maid
“ servant with a child squalling hideously
“ enter the yard, and was thanking my
“ stars that the coach would not admit of
“ two more human beings ; but I was not
“ long permitted to be wandering in so
“ agreeable a mistake, for at that instant
“ the coach door opened, and without the
“ smallest ceremony they ascended the
“ steps, and the porter closing the door,
“ the coachman went off with the greatest
“ speed : it was impossible for us all to
“ find an equal seat, I being the smallest,
“ and next the window, was consequently
“ much jammed against the coach ; it was
“ in vain that I implored for a little air ;

“ the child’s death would be inevitable if
“ a window were opened was the answer I
“ received.

“ The noise inside was in few degrees inferi-
“ or to the clamour in the street, for the child
“ never ceased to entertain the company with
“ the music of its pipe the whole way ; and to
“ add to the general misfortune, the child
“ vomited so frequently that two of the
“ gentlemen, (all of whom had hitherto re-
“ mained silent), became very vociferous
“ and inveighed so greatly against the
“ maid for bringing the child, and then
“ against the whole female sex, that I was
“ compelled for the sake of that honor and
“ delicacy which so happily distinguish it,
“ to take part in the cause of my assailed
“ companion : but I only added fuel to
“ the flame, for the two other men having

" awoke at hearing the sharp replies and
" rejoinders applied to their brothers, and
" considering the whole fraternity, as treat-
" ed with that indignity which it would be
" inconsistent with the spirit of men to en-
" dure with impunity, accordingly they be-
" gan to pronounce judgment without fur-
" ther ceremony or loss of time, on the
" weaker sex, by loading us with unjust
" insinuations and the most undeserved
" epithets, but which, though greatly ad-
" verse to our inclinations, we were com-
" pelled to bear : their next object was to
" sit in such a manner as to square their
" elbows, which rendered our respective
" situations confined and piteous : in short
" what with the unbecoming conversation
" of the men, the plan they all pursued of
" squaring their elbows, (and which I can-
" not but think was premeditated), and the
" child's continued roar, I became so ter-

“ rified, that I was pale as death by the
“ time I reached my sister’s door: she
“ immediately asked me if I had been
“ much hurt, supposing from my counte-
“ nance that the coach had been overturn-
“ ed, and had got out the brandy, ‘ere it
“ was possible for me to make her ac-
“ quainted with the real state and cause of
“ my misfortunes: but the immediate ap-
“ pearance of that invigorating spirit was
“ not altogether unnecessary, for the
“ bruises I had received from the squeezes
“ I had endured in consequence of the
“ gentlemen’s ungain position, with which
“ I acquainted my sister, had occasioned
“ so much soreness, that I deemed it ne-
“ cessary to afford myself an early appli-
“ cation of that spirit to the parts affected,
“ and which I have reason to think pre-
“ vented those painful consequences which
“ would otherwise probably have resulted
“ from the cruel conduct of the men.

“ My sister, as you may imagine, was
“ greatly surprised and shocked at my ac-
“ count and sufferings, and told me that
“ her determination had been fixed long ago
“ never to enter a stage coach except from
“ unavoidable necessity ; and from that day
“ I made the same resolution.”

CHAP. V.

“THE misfortunes you met with, surprise and shock me at the same time,” said the gentleman, “indeed I never before heard so extreme a piece of cruelty; it certainly derogates from the name of a gentleman, by which I fear few have the smallest title to be distinguished, though many are desirous of the appellation. I greatly approve of your resolution,” continued the gentleman, “though am grieved when I consider the price at which it was purchased.

“ But as we are talking about stage coaches, there is a curious incident which occurs to my mind,” added the gentleman, “ relating to a friend of mine who was going into the country by a stage in which I was a passenger: the circumstance I am about to relate is indeed far different from the one you have just mentioned, but, if it is agreeable to the party, I shall have much pleasure in the relation of it to you.” The ladies expressing their wish to hear it, the gentleman proceeded as follows.

“ The slowness and precision, (or whatever you may choose to call it), of some men is so unpardonably tedious and irksome, that it is surprising that that mode of conduct is ever pursued, yet notwithstanding it is often perceptible in men,

“ and particularly among those of weak
“ minds, who are anxious to appear more
“ sagacious than they really are.

“ The gentleman I before alluded to,
“ and who was going by the same coach
“ with myself, possessed this tardiness to
“ the greatest degree, insomuch that he
“ was perpetually the laughing-stock and
“ amusement of his friends ; in short he
“ was so slow in all his actions, words, and
“ movements, and went over the ground
“ so continually that his head was ever in
“ a constant diz.

“ He lived a few miles from town, and
“ the stage used frequently to stop at his
“ door either to set him down or take him
“ up, as he was occupied in business which
“ required his frequent attendance in
“ town.

“ The coach was one day waiting for him
“ when he was talking with a gentleman
“ in the following words, entirely forget-
“ ful that the coach was stopping solely
“ on his account.

“ Bonaparte seems at least to me a very
“ wonderful man, he certainly is so, nay
“ without doubt, and what is still, aye still
“ more surprising, he has a peculiarity of
“ mind; I think that is the right mode of
“ expression, but it is difficult to say how we
“ ought—I mean which is the best mode
“ of expression, for there are now so ma-
“ ny dictionaries, and all, yes verily all
“ different from one another; I think I
“ am right, but yet I may be wrong, it is
“ common for me,”—“ Sir” (says the coach-
“ man) “ I am waiting for you alone, Sir,
“ pray make haste.”—“ I will” answered

“ the gentleman, “ that is I mean, no impe-
“ diment arising, to be with you in a mi-
“ nute or two. “ To proceed progressive-
“ ly, (continued the gentleman to his
“ friend), “ it is common for me when I
“ seem to be going wrong that is, perhaps
“ not actually wrong, to inquire of superior
“ judgment, or in other words to ask ano-
“ ther’s opinion, perhaps not more correct
“ than my own. Pray what may be your
“ opinion ?” “ This is a delicate thing to
“ answer,” says the other gentleman, “ af-
“ ter a man of your penetration, indeed I
“ always feel a kind of shrinking back”—
“ Sir,” says the coachman, addressing the
other gentleman, “ I cannot wait any lon-
“ ger, my passengers are all tired of waiting
“ as well as myself.” “ I will come im-
“ mediately ” (returned the gentleman) “ I
“ always, said his friend continuing, feel a
“ kind of shrinking back as I before ob-

“ served, or something similar to occupying
“ another’s seat; now I’ve hit it, just that
“ sort of feeling, when I am asked my opi-
“ nion by a gentleman, and particularly by
“ one possessed of so many intellectual en-
“ dowments.

“ Sir,” (says the other gentleman), “ you
“ wrong me, or (popularly speaking) you
“ overload me; I do not call myself pro-
“ fessor, though there are now a-days ma-
“ ny ignorant, (that is unskilled), profes-
“ sors of intellectual endowments as, you
“ were so obliging as to stile me.

“ By the bye how beautifully the distinc-
“ on between the words ignorant and unskil-
“ led is elucidated in that book of mine in
“ the closet; did I ever shew it to you?
“ for I do not in general except to my

“ choice friends, as it is rather a master-piece on popular words ; you may guess the author. I have only just had it printed ; if you are willing we will step to my library before I go.”—“ Sir,” (says the coachman) “ I am going off this moment.” “ Well, (says the gentleman to his friend), then we must abandon the idea of seeing the library ; therefore coachman ” turning to him, continued he, “ I am come to get in,” “ Sir ” says the coachman “ I thought the coach would have gone without you :” “ all ready,” said he, mounting his box, “ no,” cries the gentleman from within side, “ I have left my stick behind, I say I have lost my stick, stop,” but the coachman inattentive to the exclamations of the gentleman drove off.

CHAP VI.

I FEAR I have intruded too much on my reader's time, and exhausted the greatest part of his patience, in going through so progressively this ridiculous incident, but when he considers how true a picture it presents of many persons, who, destitute of all mental qualifications, endeavour to put on a kind of pretended precision and extreme slowness, which they imagine may operate on the minds of their superiors as a kind of, I know not what, and accompanied with a sternness or rather severity of

aspect; and hollowness of tone, they indulge a hope that it will give some weight to their almost unmeaning expressions: but alas! how often it happens that layers of nets are by their own unsuccessful stratagems themselves frequently caught.

Thus it is with the possessors of these imbecile minds, who incapable of attracting the notice and regard of others by their mental productions, exhibit as a blind those shallow artifices just mentioned, which contain the clearest manifestation of their ignorance and folly.

I had not proceeded far on my return to my stand before a voice bid me draw up to the corner of a street, and it was not long before Doctor Atkins entered, who was going with his sister-in-law and two of his cousins as far as Bishopsgate-Street, and from thence they were to

proceeded from one of the inns to his rectory, in the County of Essex.

The doctor was reaching that period of life when the spirits begin to flag, and require something humorous or interesting to entertain that portion of time which must otherwise pass dull and tedious: fortunately, Mrs. Martin who was one of his cousins, was capable by the flow of a luxuriant imagination and cheerful discourse, to enliven the doctor during part of their ride to the inn, till at length having exhausted her store of words and the doctor getting rather snappish, she fortunately recalled the following true circumstance to her recollection, which exactly filled up the remaining time, and seemed, as she proceeded in it, to occupy no small portion of the reverend divine's attention.

CHAP. VII.

"**T**H^ERE was a gentleman at Chelsea who was remarkably fond of being considered heroic, and to have performed several exploits which he always took particular care should redound to his honor and advantage; there was one story in preference to others of which he was partially fond, and often accustomed to relate, chiefly no doubt on account of the valour he might be credited to possess in the relation of it, and with which I propose now to acquaint

you, though fear I shall fail in its proper embellishments.

“ He was one day walking through Five Fields, near Chelsea, when he was accosted by two footpads, who demanded his money, and accordingly with the true spirit of heroism, he immediately drew his sword from the scabbard, and as quickly stabbed one of the robbers through the body, and the other would have met with the same speedy dissolution, had not his sword run into a post, upon which the remaining robber ran off with the utmost precipitation : this circumstance the hero was constantly acquainting the same company with ; and one day a gentleman who resided at the same village, and had heard of this heroic exploit from others, but not from the mouth of the hero, happened to meet him at a dinner party, having previous to it designedly provided himself with the point of a sword.

“The cloth had not long been removed, before this great atchievement was brought on the carpet, when the last-mentioned gentleman produced his point of a sword, which he observed must have been the same, as he picked it up close to the spot described by the heroic relater: the hero begged he might be permitted to preserve the point, as a small memento of his as he confessed rather noble exploit, and with which he should undoubtedly satisfy several of his friends, who could scarcely believe it possible for any mortal to have been the agent of so distinguishing an atchievement.”

The above story had the happy effect of entirely removing the reverend divine’s irritability, and he arrived at the inn in perfect good humour: but judge his surprise and mortification, on finding that the coach, in which he had secured a place, had left the

inn half an hour, in consequence of its being the winter season, which circumstance, (though the doctor had been before apprised of it), had escaped his memory.

He found, however, some consolation in spying out an old friend, who had seated himself on a barrel that was standing in the inn yard, considering how he should dispose of himself in consequence of his plans being thwarted by a similar disappointment to that of the reverend divine: but after mutual condolences, and a kind invitation from the doctor, it was agreed that they should all return to his house.

While my horses were resting I overheard this conversation, and thought it prudent to wait the issue, thinking it probable I might have the job of conveying them back to the place from whence I had set out with them, which proved to be the case, and in

a few minutes, they all with the stranger got in, who I soon overheard relate the following adventure which entertained me more than any other I had heard before.

“I am,” said he addressing the reverend divine, an “apothecary, and should not have intruded upon my story in acquainting you with my profession, if it were not materially necessary, as you will find in the sequel:

“My residence is in Bond-Street, and a few weeks since, a letter was brought me there requesting my attendance in the country, about eight miles distant, to see a patient who resided there, and who was, as I was informed, dangerously ill; as soon as possible I complied with the request of my letter, and sat off in the afternoon, an offer being contained in my letter of sleeping at

my patient's house one night and to return the next morning, which I deemed it most prudent to accept ; this being the case, I did not leave town 'till late, and I arrived at the house of my patient between eight and nine at night,

“I immediately requested that my arrival might be made known to the family, in order that I might be shewn into the patient's (who was a gentleman about sixty) apartment ; the servant who opened the door to me appeared ignorant that his master had been suddenly taken ill with a fit of the gout, and that he had sent to his apothecary, but in compliance with my desire conducted me to the parlour where his master was sitting without even a fire.

“Struck with astonishment at this unexpected sight, I immediately deemed it necessary, without permission, to ring the bell, as in my opinion death would inevi-

tably. ensue, were my patient to remain then a minute longer in a room without a fire : I likewise told the servant to have a fire lit in his master's bed room, concluding with a request that my patient might be removed to it immediately : " for goodness " sake, Sir," said I, " consider how suddenly " you have been seized ; pray don't think " so lightly of it at your time of life, such " sudden fits are very alarming.

" What do you mean ?" returned the gentleman, " who sent you ? do you in-
" tend to worry my out of my life ? here
" was I "(continued he) " sitting quietly, and
" you come in, roaring like a mad bull,
" ordering fires to be lit, Sir, if you are in
" your right senses, my servant shall chas-
" tise you 'ere you quit my house, I never
" received such an insult before ; an apo-
" thecary coming in at all hours, and with-
" out any previous notice is not a fit object

“ to escape punishment. Now without
“ further preface, proceeded the gentle-
“ man, to lessen, (I will not say prevent)
“ your own chastisement, tell me who
“ sent you? or whether you came with
“ the foul intent to kill me by surprise?”
“ speak” continued he, ringing the bell, “and
“ give me an unexceptionable answer; or
“ my servant shall punish you in my pre-
“ sence.” The foregoing was the exact
conversation which took place between me
and my reputed patient, said the apotheca-
ry, excepting a trifling addition which I
will acquaint you with.

CHAP. VIII.

“ NEVER was mortal more astonished
“ than I was, and verily thought one of the
“ other of us was out of his senses :”
“ speak,” said he aloud, “ once more.”—
“ Pray moderate your passions, said I, re-
“ collecting my situation, inflammatories
“ may be dangerous ; do, Sir, let me feel
“ your pulse ?” “ Feel my pulse ?” return-
ed he, “ give him the pulse of my stick ?”
cried he to his servant, “ hold him up that
“ his blood may have proper circulation,
“ and that his senses may return.”

“ Now, Sir,” said he, addressing me, “ give an account of yourself? how you came hither, and with what intent,” “Sir,” answered I, having a little recovered myself, “ here is a letter which I received yesterday, and which I supposed came from you, but now discover it to be a most cruel deception.”

“ The gentleman, having read the letter once or twice over, became a little more pacified, and at length went so far as to beg pardon for the harsh words with which he had greeted me, in short by degrees he became as civil as he was before ungently, pressing my stay at his house that night, and even the whole of next day with such solicitation, that it was very difficult only to accept the former invitation, but which I effected, and left his house the following morning, when we parted better and more intimate friends than we had ever before been.

“ I reached town about twelve o’clock, by which time I had almost forgotten the last night’s adventure, which circumstance was rather apropos, as it made room for others of a more important nature.

“ It happened, as I had nearly reached my house that there was a stoppage in the street, and after the post-chaise had stood still a few minutes, I let down the glass of the window, to observe what occasioned it, never having before known so great a number of all sorts of vehicles assemble together.

“ I was within four doors of my house, and seeing a couple of coal carts loaded, ventured to order the carters to drive on, as they prevented the thoroughfare for carriages: they told me they could not stir a peg, that all the vehicles of differ-

ent descriptions which were waiting, belonged to the same house, which was a Mr. G——'s, an apothecary, higher up, which was no other than my own.

"I was, as you may suppose, greatly surprised at this intelligence, and getting out of my chaise, made forward towards my own house.

"It was not without great difficulty that I obtained entrance, as the passage and steps were crowded with carmen, post chaise boys, coal-heavers, dustmen, piano-forte makers, engine makers, and even waggoners with their waggons, with many others, waiting to be admitted, according to the orders they had respectively received: I told all I saw that they had been grossly deceived, for I had ordered nothing, this occasioned a little dispersion of

carriages, but it only made room for others, which had returned a second time in consequence of not finding me at home before, and had been ordered by their masters to come again.

CHAP. IX.

“ **B**Y the time the greater part of these vehicles had dispersed, the entrance of the house was again filled, but with persons of other descriptions, pastry-cooks, fruiterers, bakers, confectioners, taylors, silversmiths, with many others, all of whom I was obliged, (to prevent the tumult that would arise by my going out to them), to have brought to me one by one in a little room.

“ My labours were nearly completed by ten o’clock at night, and I had sent all comers from my door, though not without their shewing evident signs of discontent and displeasure, at being rendered the objects of such provoking ridicule.

“ I had now become a little composed and quiet, meditating the pleasures of retiring to rest after the fatigues I had experienced that day, as well as the evening before, and had just put out all my candles but one, when to my terror and surprise, I observed a figure enter and stop when he came within two yards distance of me, the recollection of him even now alarms me.

“ He was habited in a brown snuff coloured coat, which nearly covered him from head to feet; his waistcoat was one of those which you might have observed hanging

up in Monmouth-Street about twenty years since, edged with gold fringe and mother of pearl buttons, and which appeared evidently impaired by time ; added to this he had a large slouched hat studded with silver stars, and which, when pulled off, presented a wig larger than I had ever before seen, beaded with goose-quills, so that it was a figure of so awful an appearance, that I did not for a second time venture to trust my eyes with it ; in my then indefinable horror, he appeared to me an extraordinary porcupine, which I thought might have been at last sent from the Exeter Change to close my harrassed existence.

“ I was soon cleared of my mistake, for in a moment the figure came close to me, and in a whisper, said, all things were ready, except the blue devils, which he feared could not be formed in less than

three hours ; "but," continued he, "I will go home immediately and hurry my men, " who I have not seen for the last two hours, having been at Lady L——'s house, who had intended giving a masquerade this evening, but has put it off, " in consequence of my informing her that my men were all employed for your masquerade to night."

" After saying this, he flew out of the room, and, making towards the outward door, cried out, " Fear not ! they shall all be ready."

" All this surprised me so greatly, that I was almost bereft of my understanding, and he left me as might be expected, sunk in a state of cruel stupefaction.

" I had not long been in this reverie, when my maid servant entered, and inform-

ed me it was gone twelve: I had by this time recovered in some degree my recollection, and told her what the strange being had said, bidding her lock up all the doors, for not a single person more should enter my house that night; so each of us accordingly retired to our own rooms, and I enjoyed, what I greatly stood in need of, a most refreshing sleep, but was informed in the morning that several gentlemen and ladies and their servants, having knocked at my door a considerable time, supposed, from its not being opened, that they had mistaken the street, and therefore ordered their coachmen to drive off.

CHAP. X.

“ **T**HIS was the incident that occurred “ to me,” continued the gentleman, “ and “ which I think was not without provo- “ cation.”

“ Very much so indeed,” said the lady, “ and pray” added she, “ were you ever “ able to discover the wicked designer of “ such a plot? indeed I think no punish- “ ment sufficient for the person, whose mind “ is capable of such malevolence to his fel- “ low creatures.”

“ No madam,” said he, “ I never was able to discover who was the cruel author, but if it were possible for me to do so, in my opinion I should not be doing justice to mankind to leave unpunished so vile an offender.”

“ I approve of your principles extremely,” said the lady, “ and trust the ill disposed wretch will not remain long concealed.” “ Indeed the gentleman you visited in the country,” continued the lady, “ did not act within the smallest rule of propriety, in his rude behaviour towards you, although he seemed desirous afterwards to endeavour to compensate for his rough conduct by his marked civility and politeness, which in some measure extinguished the blot his character must have inevitably suffered, from his having treated his medical gentleman on his entrance with such disrespect.”

Doctor Atkins was so shocked at the treatment his friend had experienced, that he was almost incapable of uttering any thing, and what he did say was in so low tone, that I could not overhear it.

I had set my party down at the doctor's house, which was a few miles from town, and was returning back to my stand, when a servant proceeded hastily from a house in the paragon, and perceiving me to be disengaged, bid me draw up to the house from whence he came, where I found a party had fixed to visit Covent Garden Theatre that evening, in order to see Mrs. Siddons, in the character of Isabella in the "Fatal Marriage," and being disappointed in the carriage they were accustomed to depend on, their hopes of seeing the theatre that evening were almost exhausted, when fortunately for them passed by.

The ladies, two of whom seemed not above fourteen years of age, and two gentlemen, (altogether five in number) got in very readily, when the conversation, as might be expected, turned upon the merits of the actress they were about to see, as well as on the serious subject of the play, and the earnest attention that it preserves to the end.

At length the elder lady observed to her young friends, that from the character they would see sustained, many profitable lessons might be derived, and after descanting for a short time on the uncertainty of human happiness, and the numerous crosses which continually opposed it and that the great antidote against all misfortunes was the placing our desires and affections in a situation consistent with the rules of propriety, she related to them

e following circumstance, which in her
inion was not altogether inapplicable
the present moment, and being strict-
true, she doubted not but that it would
mand their attention. She proceed-
as follows.

CHAP. XI.

—

“LORD ———, when a youth at
“Winchester School, fell in love with a
“Miss ———, of that place, a very
“beautiful and amiable girl, his friends
“hoping that absence would remove the
“impression made on his heart, sent
“him abroad, where he remained several
“years, but all their endeavours to extin-
“guish his attachment proved unavailing,
“for on his return to England, he renewed
“his addresses to Miss ———, and
“soon afterwards married her : they were

“ blessed with five sweet children, and their
“ marriage was crowned with happiness,
“ 'till a most shocking and unnatural pas-
“ sion took possession of Lord ———,
“ for his half sister, Miss ———,
“ with whom he afterwards lived, and had
“ several children by her.

“ She has long, it is said, become a sin-
“ cere penitent, and lives in seclusion with
“ her children, over one of whom she is
“ supposed to repeat these affecting lines.

“ Sleep my babe ill fated boy !
“ Offspring of unlawful joy,
“ Soundly sleep ! And never know,
“ All my heart's distracting woe :

“ Fain would I with anguish wild,
“ Pray to God to bless thee, child,
“ But that injur'd God will ne'er
“ Listen to thy mother's pray'r :

“ Yet, if heav’n no more will shed
“ Balm’ry comforts on my head,
“ What its justice takes from me,
“ May its mercy grant to thee !”*

“ Poor Lady ———, lived in grief and
“ retirement in the lower part of Lincoln-
“ shire with her five children ’till about two
“ years since, when death released her from
“ her misery.”

The party seemed deeply moved at this affecting circumstance, and one of the gentlemen, who was a clergyman, not deeming it improper or unseasonable to give some general advice to the young ladies, observed, that in his opinion, there was nothing in this life more arduous than the proper choice of a friend, and nothing more to be guarded against than the hasty formation of an attachment.

* The foregoing lines have been set to music.

“ We all,” continued he, “ would live happily if in our power, it is all our wish and design ; but we know not what constitutes a happy life, we are engaged however in a blind and eager inquiry after it, and by mistaking our road, the more speed we make the further we wander from the wished-for path.

“ We should consider what will give us possession of eternal happiness, not what is most customary and generally approved of : worldly felicity is apt to turn the brain and elevate a man too much, but, if he be ever so fortunate as to regain his senses, he will confess, that he wishes undone nearly whatsoever he has done ; and that the things he dreaded were better than those he prayed for.

“ The real blessings of life are easily attained, but we wilfully blunder on in

“ the dark: tranquillity consists in an
“ equal mind which no alteration of fortune
“ can exalt or depress.

“ Had Lord —————, possessed this
“ desirable calmness, had he not, eagerly
“ rushing forward, voluntarily consulted
“ the gratification of his passions in prefe-
“ rence to the guidance of reason, if indeed
“ his affections had not been improperly
“ placed, he might have enjoyed a perpe-
“ tual calm: “his nature,” continued the
gentleman, “was benevolent, and previ-
“ ous to the lamentable disgrace, (as I have
“ understood), he attracted the love and ad-
“ miration of those known to him.”

The party now arrived at the theatre,
where, (no appointment having been made
for my conveying the company back),
I left them.

The following morning was unusually fair for the season of the year, being early in December, and I had been waiting unemployed on my stand, (though very unusual), nearly an hour, when a footboy desired me to drive to No. —, in Grosvenor-Place, and stop ; I accordingly obeyed, and soon two ladies got in, and the servant behind, from whom I learned their names, and who ordered me to drive to various parts of the town for his mistresses to pay their ceremonial morning visits. During the ride I overheard the following conversation.

“ This is the ninth of December,” said Mrs. Baker to her sister, “ and no less than my bridal day.

“ Ah ! you know I always said that nobody should ever hear me complain of the events that day was the origin of ;

“ and that should my marriage in any way
“ prove disagreeable, owing to the per-
“ verse disposition of my husband, I al-
“ ways boasted of my ability to conceal it,
“ and you, I think, must be sensible of my
“ ever as yet having done so, but I do say
“ nobody else could have endured the cru-
“ el things that I have at times experien-
“ ced from him, and yet at other times he
“ seems as if he loved me.

“ It is a long time since I've seen you,
“ and though painful subject ; I must relate
“ to you our journey to Folkestone with
“ the children, who you know are always
“ cross enough.”

“ My dear sister,” said her companion,
“ I beg you will not relate any thing that
“ is likely to produce any painful sensa-
“ tion, for nothing is further from my de-
“ sire, than that you who are possessed of

“ so many domestic grievances, should un-
“ necessarily be afflicted with any addi-
“ onal trouble.”

“ Your kindness,” said Mrs. Baker, “ is
“ only equal to that you have shewn me
“ on other occasions, and, could I suppose
“ my husband’s temper to be in any degree
“ moderated by my silence, I would
“ observe it, but I am well aware that
“ will never be the case ; therefore will not
“ deprive myself of the trifling gratification
“ of relating my own sorrows to a sister,
“ and particularly to one who is ever ready
“ to condole and sympathise with the dis-
“ tressed.

CHAP. XII.

"WELL," said Mrs. Baker, "we sat off from Grosvenor-Place at seven o'clock in a post-chaise, Captain Baker, myself, and the two children, who are between two and three years of age; to proceed progressively, I must inform you that the clouds never ceased discharging themselves the whole way.

"We had not got many miles before the children became terribly fractious and wanted their playthings, it was in vain

to endeavour to quiet them, I strained every nerve for the purpose, but all attempts were futile.

“ I could have borne with this and perhaps more without complaining, but in the midst of the confusion my husband became in a wretched humour and pulled the children’s hair for a considerable time, and scolded me for bringing them with us ; this was too much, I had borne enough before and therefore gave vent to my feelings by a flood of tears.

“ In this uncomfortable condition we arrived at Farningham, (the first stage), where, to our inexpressible disappointment, not a chaise was to be had, but out came the landlady begging to know if she could be of any use in bringing out some harts-horn and water, when my inhuman husband

fearful of my explaining the true cause of my tears, said I had met with an accident, which owing to the discomposure it had occasioned in the carriage rendered the end rather tragical.

“ I was too low to make any reply to what Captain Baker had said, and fortunately meeting with a return chaise, we drove off, though not without the laughter and ridiculous jokes made by the ostlers and others standing by, who had considered it in a far different light from what was the real truth.

“ I was very angry with Captain Baker for his conduct, who appeared afterwards in some degree sorry at the distress it had occasioned me.

“ We now proceeded for some miles quietly, and the children appeared tired of

‘crying: I did not venture to utter a single syllable, fearing I should only hasten that storm which I foreboded must inevitably succeed so unusual a calm: I therefore was mute though it was not long of much avail, for soon the children, without any provocation, began roaring louder than before, insomuch that the shock set the horses off at full speed, and put Captain B. into a worse humour than at first.

“ We rode on in this condition for little less than six miles, which put some kind of period to our distraction, for we had now arrived at the Royal Oak, on Wrotham Heath, situated about two miles beyond the town of Wrotham; here we again changed our vehicle and horses, and set forward for Maidstone, though not in a pleasanter mode than hitherto, for Captain

Baker now became more acrimonious and ill-humoured than before, and it was quite impossible to endeavour to make him comfortable.

“ When I noticed a house, on account of its grandeur and magnificent appearance, he would affirm and maintain that it was only a cottage, the same with the parks we observed, he called them mere paddocks, and by the time we had got to Maidstone, chiefly owing to his perverse temper, together with the noise of the children, my head was nearly ready to split with torment.

“ We had now arrived at half our journey’s end, and to undergo all the disasters we had encountered, over again, afforded no very pleasing a prospect: but so it was, and we had to make the most of our

time as it was then two o'clock, we accordingly got equipped and set off with all haste.

“ It was now that I enjoyed some portion of tranquillity, though not without fears of a new commotion, but which happily were not realized, for the whole party, excepting myself, went through the next stage under the powers of Somnus, who I should have rejoiced had he taken them sooner under his protection.

“ We now arrived at Charing, where, fortunately, owing to our continuing the same post chaise on to the next stage, my party remained dormant, and were not interrupted 'till we got to Ashford, which was the last stage before we reached Folkstone, the place of our destination.

“ Reasonable beings would naturally conclude, that when Captain B. awoke, he would appear as pleasant and agreeable as he was before morose and sullen, but not so, my dear friend, indeed quite the reverse, and instead of an honest acknowledgement of his own ill-behaviour and an endeavour to make himself pleasing, his slumbers broke with accents which infused poison into all the hopes and conjectures I had before fondly cherished. ‘ Well teasing wife,’ he exclaimed, ‘ and “ where are we now?”

“ I feigned sleep, but this was not of much avail, for he suddenly seized my hair, and pulled it to such a degree, that I was compelled to roar out from agony; this awoke the children who, being alarmed at the noise occasioned by my husband’s brutality, recommenced their

cries, which did not cease 'till we reached our recently taken lodging at Folkstone.

“Here we got out, (I suppose I did) though I know not what I did, I was in such tormenting pains: I told the maid (who went by the coach a day before to get things in a state of preparation), to stuff the children’s mouths with bread and butter to stop the progress of their cries; I then went up stairs and sunk down upon the bed, I believe more dead than alive: here I remained for a considerable time, and when I went down again, was rejoiced to find Captain B. in a very good humour: he had sent the children to bed, who I believe were the cause of his ill-conduct on his journey to me, but which I told him had my forgiveness,”

“Well,” returned the sister, “I commend you forbearance, though must add

“ that I never heard, in all the accounts I
“ have had from you of your husband’s
“ faults, any which appear to me less ca-
“ pable of being excused.”

CHAP. XIII.

I WAS returning to my stand in Oxford-Street, after having set down the unfortunate wife and her amiable sister, when I was accosted by two young ladies who seemed to belong to that class of females who superintend the care and education of young ladies at seminaries in the nature of assistants or governesses ; they commanded me to stop, accordingly I obeyed, jumped down and opened the door, when the ladies instantly got in and bid me drive to the Obelisk in St. George's Fields, it being

their intention to go to the Surry theatre in company with some other ladies who they were to meet in that neighbourhood.

I mounted my box and drove off at full speed.

“ Well,” says one of the ladies who was rather older than the other, “ the marriage state to be sure is desirable under some circumstances, but objectionable under others: I think I have understood the common calculation to be that there is only one man out of ten who is worthy of a prudent wife and if that be the case, surely those are fools who risk their own condition unless under peculiar circumstances, and in pursuance of the subject we have entered upon, namely, the happiness of the bridal state, I will relate a circumstance which I think will give

“ some weight to my opinion, and afford
“ a good reason for the supposition that it
“ has not been too hastily formed; as often
“ indeed as I reflect on this topic, no less of-
“ ten am I convinced that my sentiments
“ respecting it are not without due consi-
“ deration.”

“

“ I long to hear,” said her friend, “ any
“ thing in persuasion of women continuing
“ in a disencumbered state, though I must
“ confess my wishes in that respect are ra-
“ ther contrary to your’s, yet I shall ever
“ retain a due deference to the opinion of
“ one who I consider as possessing no small
“ portion of penetration and judgment.”

“ Madam,” (returned the other), “ you
“ flatter me exceedingly, indeed my ambi-
“ tion and delight would be in the greatest
“ degree elevated, could they rest under

“ the enviable assurance that my discrimination and judgment were not inferior to your kindness and condescension. But my promise shall not escape unperformed, and I will now relate the instance, to prove my assertion, respecting the preference to a single rather than a married state.

“ A friend of mine in Warwickshire lately married a gentleman of the same county, they appeared previous to their marriage, greatly attached to each other, though I have reason to fear that the union did not tend to increase the felicity of either party.

“ The lady had been accustomed always to reside at her father's mansion from the time of the courtship to the marriage day, but that day, alas ! (as it often is) was productive of events which, (not be-

“ing anticipated are unfortunately not
“ looked forward to with sufficient caution),
“ proved grievously distressing, for, after
“ the ceremony was concluded, and the
“ party were on their return, the lady got
“ in her parent’s chariot instead of her hus-
“ band’s, and according to the determina-
“ tion made at the time of setting out, the
“ whole of the party (including the bride)
“ had intended dining at her quondam place
“ of residence, but the husband perceiving
“ the desire of his recently made wife, and
“ anxious to lose no time in order that an
“ understanding might take place respect-
“ ing the authority which, in his conception,
“ he alone had a right of possessing over
“ her, accosted her, just after she had seat-
“ ed herself, in the following words.

“ Madam, you wish we should return to
“ Mr. A—, your father and dine with

“ him, I now inform you that is not my intention, my desire is that you return in our own chariot and dine at our own house; I must acknowledge that you entered the church mistress, but at the same time it is your business to own that I came out master, and shall not now pass by the opportunity afforded me of shewing my authority.

“ The lady was compelled to enter her own chariot and ride home with her husband, which ride, (though the first she ever had with him); I have heard her affirm was the most uncomfortable one she ever had.

“ Now Mrs. —— (continued the lady), pray draw a natural conclusion from this instance, and tell me whether you do not think the husband’s behaviour reprehensible.

“sible and even to be called barbarous, in
“asserting that right and control so pre-
“maturely, the idea of which is so adverse
“to the feelings of the generality of our
“sex?”

“I am sorry,” answered Mrs. ——, “to
“differ so widely from you in opinion, and
“more, particularly respecting your last
“sentence, which proceeded with too much
“haste, and was without doubt void of that
“exactness and nicety of judgment with
“which your opinion is so usually accom-
“panied.

“In regard to the obedience due to the
“husband from the wife, that claim has
“never been denied, but on the contrary
“universally acknowledged with the great-
“est delight on the part of the wise and
“prudent wife; it is on this depends the
“order which pervades families in general,

“ and without which the caprices of women, (meeting with no check whatever but consequently gaining ground by degrees), would inevitably be the cause of trouble, distraction, and unhappiness at home, misfortunes which are happily prevented by that order of obedience to the husband, who has, or is reputed to have the greater portion of wisdom, and therefore more adapted for the possession of the reins of government, and which the matrimonial form so seriously enjoins.”

“ Well,” (answered the other lady) “ I must confess your words have had some effect with me, and I already begin to vary my sentiments on the subject which I had so very lately considered unnatural, but it is only a proof, that I defended or rather complained of the hardships imposed by men on the women

“ with too great warmth, and too little reflection, however I now perceive the importance of the wife's humility and obedience to her husband.”

Mrs. —— was muttering some syllables relative to the happiness she experienced at her friend's altered opinion, when I set them down at the Obelisk as directed.

CHAP XIV.

I WAS ruminating on the conversation of the two ladies I had just conveyed when a voice saluted my ear, bidding me draw up, I instantly complied, and soon after a gentleman accompanied with three ladies, whose deportment in some degree distinguished them from that class of females who more frequently use this kind of conveyance, entered.

I had scarcely sat off, when the gentleman said if it were agreeable he would ac-

quaint them with the interesting story it seems he had previously proposed, and for the truth of which they might depend on, as he was well acquainted with a remaining branch of the family. The ladies signified the pleasure they should receive from listening to it, and at the same time thanked him for his kind wishes to amuse them.

The gentleman accordingly began as follows.

“ It is now nearly an hundred years since
“ the following circumstance occurred at
“ the delightful seat of B—— Park, in
“ Hampshire, the owner of that sweet
“ place, a young man of large fortune, paid
“ his addresses to a very young lady in the
“ neighbourhood, and the day of their nup-
“ tials arrived, when the friends of both
“ parties assembled to partake of the fes-

“ tivities usual upon such occasions : the
“ ceremony took place early in the morn-
“ ing, and soon after their return home the
“ carriages were in readiness to convey the
“ party round the grounds, but the bride
“ and her young companions declined ac-
“ companying them, preferring the spec-
“ tacle of the spacious and elegant apart-
“ ments of the mansion, of which she had
“ so recently become mistress,

“ They had not passed above half an-
“ hour in admiring the pictures and costly
“ furniture in the numerous apartments,
“ when one of the youngest of the party,
“ (entering one of them) observed that this
“ was of all others the best adapted for the
“ play of “ hooper’s hide,” “ the bride
“ perceiving the wish of her young friend,
“ with the greatest good nature proposed
“ joining in this juvenile recreation : the

“ turn soon came for the bride to hide, and
“ while her companions were in search af-
“ ter her, the dinner bell summoned them
“ to the dining room ; but what was the
“ surprise of all present, when no bride
“ made her appearance, to sit down with-
“ out her was impossible, in quest of whom
“ the party therefore divided, but after the
“ strictest search no tidings could be ob-
“ tained of her.

“ The mirth and festivity was at an end,
“ and every countenance betrayed anxiety
“ and sorrow, the bridegroom was inconsol-
“ able, and after some weeks, giving up
“ all hopes of his happiness being restored,
“ he determined on leaving the kingdom,
“ flattering himself that change of scene
“ might in some degree restore tranquillity
“ to his mind.

“ After an absence of several years, the
“ death of his father made it necessary for

“ him to return to his native country, but
“ as he felt assured he could never taste of
“ happiness in the place where it had been
“ so unexpectedly and suddenly snatched
“ from him, he determined to have his
“ own paternal mansion entirely taken
“ down and rebuilt, and therefore wrote
“ directions to his steward for that purpose;
“ when upon opening a chest, previous to
“ its removal, what was the horror and
“ dismay of all present, at beholding the
“ remains of the unfortunate bride, whose
“ biding place had for such a length of
“ time proved her secret grave.

“ The new edifice is still standing and
“ in possession of a worthy baronet, with
“ whom I have been on terms of intimacy,
“ and whose family purchased it of the
“ disconsolate husband, as after the dread-
“ ful disclosure he could never be prevailed
“ upon to inhabit it.

“ It is needless to observe that the accident was occasioned by the chest having a spring lock, from which unfortunate circumstance the bride was unable to open it, and her hiding place was at too great a distance for her companions to hear her voice.”

The ladies seemed by their countenances deeply affected at the fate which attended the unhappy bride, and were for a time dumb with amazement and horror at the idea of death arising from a consequence so unlooked for: at length one of the ladies broke silence by observing that they had just reached Westminster Bridge, accordingly (on receiving a signal) I drew up and handed the ladies out.

After waiting a short time the party re-entered my coach, and, in return for the dismal circumstance the gentleman had in-

formed them of, the elder lady, taking from her pocket a paper, proposed reading to them the following story in verse which it contained, trusting (as she added) that it would have a contrary effect to the preceding one, and by producing some entertainment, could not fail of enlivening the party.

The ladies as well as the gentleman expressed their obligations for the kind manner in which she endeavoured to please them, and entreating her to lose no further time, the lady, with her usual good nature, proceeded as follows.

CHAP. XV.

THE

TRAVELLER TRICK'D,

Modern Tale.

“ A MAN of late from London came,
No matter who, or what his name ;
But one who duly sends his letters
Of warning to his six-months debtors :
His house of call was at the Crown,
A noted inn, in W—b—n town :
He waited on his worthy friends,
At night his summons each attends,

K

To drink a glass and pay arrears,
And give fresh orders for his wares :
The bowl was fill'd, and fill'd again,
And each man stagger'd home at ten :
Previous to this our London toper
Ordered a fowl and broth for supper ;
But when he parted from his guest,
With mind compos'd he went to rest.
The waiter quickly laid the cloth,
And on it plac'd the fowl and broth ;
Our traveller sound asleep behold !
And, lest the supper should get cold,
Will thought 'twere best it should be eat,
And graceless sat to pick a bit ;
But Will, whose appetite was keen,
(Allowed the best in all the inn)
Could not desist, it was so good,
He almost clear'd the savoury food ;
Then fetch'd a bottle of the best,
To cheer himself, and crown the jest ;
Drank to his worthy friend asleep,
Nay, drank it all, (he drank so deep)
Except one glass, t'espouse his cause,
And make it carry some applause.
Then took the cloth and fragments out,
And whisper'd what he'd been about,

When, sworn to secrecy profound,
A gen'ral laugh by all went round.
Mean while the gentleman awoke,
And rung the bell, and curs'd the cook ;
Will ! waiter ! I have starving been,
Haste, haste, and bring the supper in.
Your supper, Sir, you surely jest,
You finish'd that an hour at least.
At this our traveller musing sat,
And in surprise he scratch'd his pate.
I cannot think that I have eat !
But yet the wisest may forget.
You drank your wine too, Sir, indeed,
A bottle good ;—the d—l I did !
A bottle ! didst not help me Will ?
No, Sir, you scarcely left a gill.
P—x on your wine, it hurts my head,
Ring for the maid, I'll go to bed.
At eight next morn our guest arose,
Complain'd the gout had seiz'd his toes
He curs'd hot suppers, and the wine,
And vow'd in future but to dine ;
Order'd his boots, and paid the bill,
And sixpence gave to honest Will."

The ladies signified that they had experienced much amusement at the hearing of the verses which put the party in high good humour, indeed the gentleman was so much pleased with them, that he begged the lady's permission for a short time to be favoured with the paper containing them, in order that he might take a copy for the entertainment of his friends, she immediately granted his request, and he, pocketting the paper with thanks, promised to return it to her the following day.

The party now quitted my coach, and I was proceeding to my stand, when a female voice saluted my ear with the kind and familiar appellation of "honest friend :" she was an elderly lady, and benevolence was strongly depicted in her countenance, and

not only there indeed was that virtue apparent, for whilst beckoning to me, her hands were busily employed in rummaging half-pence from her pockets to distribute amongst some ragged children: she ascended the steps of the coach, accompanied by a gentleman, amidst the grateful acknowledgments of the mean rabble; and I drove off: but had not proceeded far, before I received a check, and on looking behind, perceived the lady from the window imploring me not to whip the horses, but added that she would give me sixpence more than the fare to go a little faster, as she feared being too late for the Hampstead stage.

I complied with her desire as well as I could, and was soon diverted by the gentleman's relation of the following curious

adventure, which he informed the lady had recently occurred to him.

The gentleman to the best of my recollection began thus.

CHAP. XVI.

“ I MUST in the first place inform you
“ that my employment is to collect debts
“ for my master; and I had been travelling
“ through great part of Surry for that pur-
“ pose, and arrived at Weyhill, (as ill
“ luck would have it), at the time of the
“ holding of the fair at that place, when
“ the inns are usually crowded, I was how-
“ ever accommodated with lodging at
“ one of them, and being much fatigued,
“ retired to rest at rather an early hour,

“ I placed what money I had collected,
“ (according to custom), under my pillow,
“ and had been in bed about four hours,
“ as I imagined, when I was awoke from
“ my sleep by the door being opened, and
“ on looking up, judge my terror and amaze-
“ ment, at perceiving a man at the end
“ of my bed with a red night cap which al-
“ most covered his head, and a large knife
“ in his hand, who in a gruff voice said,
“ “ get up and follow me directly” and then
“ vanished

“ I was so greatly petrified with astro-
“ nishment as to be deprived of the power
“ of motion, indeed it was with difficulty
“ that I could believe myself awake; I at
“ length however roused myself and tried
“ to lock the door, but found to my grief
“ and mortification there was no lock to
“ it; I however managed to place my bed
“ against it, and then thinking myself per-

“ fectly secure, went to bed, and had nearly composed myself, when I felt my bed gently pushed away, and could perceive the door open and the same figure present itself again, who, with a stern countenance, commanded me to follow him immediately or that I should repent not doing so, upon saying which he disappeared.

“ I was (as you may suppose) most dreadfully terrified, however, after considering a few minutes, I deemed it most advisable to dress myself and to go down stairs, trusting I might then be enabled to alarm somebody, I accordingly quitted my room, and descended the stairs without encountering the dreaded apparition, but to my extreme joy, met the landlord, who expressed great surprise at my rising so early ; I told him that

“ I should set off directly and never intend-
“ ed entering his house again, that I en-
“ joyed scarce any repose, having during
“ the night experienced all the apprehensi-
“ ons of being murdered.

“ I then acquainted the landlord with
“ my fright from the beginning, and ended
“ it with an order that my horse might be
“ immediately got ready.

“ The landlord signified the most un-
“ feigned sorrow for the alarm I had under-
“ gone, and at the same time said he was
“ the more concerned from the knowledge
“ that he alone was the cause of it, “ for,”
added he, “ the house being quite full, you
“ were obliged to sleep in the servant’s
“ room, and the person from whom you
“ received so great an alarm, was no other
“ than the butcher who went to call the

“ man up to assist him in killing a hog, and
“ through my inattention and forgetfulness,
“ the circumstance of only your sleeping
“ there was not made known to him; the
“ servant being naturally very lazy, the
“ butcher was in the habit of scolding him;”
“ but ” (continued the landlord addressing
me) “ I am greatly grieved for the alarm it
“ has occasioned you, and entreat your for-
“ giveness.”

“ I readily pardoned him, but not being
“ inclined to return to bed again, mounted
“ my horse and proceeded on my journey.”

The gentlemen's entertaining and interesting adventure produced the desired effect of amusing the lady during her long ride, lulling her active ideas and composing her restless imagination.

The next person who hired my coach, was a gentleman of about fifty years of age,

who was accompanied by three very young ladies, his daughters, whom he had just taken from a school in Russell-square, on their entering my coach he desired me to drive to Hammersmith: this long ride afforded the gentleman an opportunity of amusing his young friends with a strange incident which he informed them had lately occurred to an acquaintance of his.

'They expressed great impatience to hear it, and he unwilling to keep them any longer in suspense, related the following true circumstance.

CHAP XVII.

“ IT was a gloomy evening in November, the boisterous weather prevented Captain Williams proceeding on his journey, he was therefore obliged to make the best of his way to an inn not far distant, intending to lodge there that night, and arrived there in the midst of a violent tempest of thunder and lightning.

“ Whilst conversing with the landlord concerning the news of the place, he was

informed that the villagers believed a house in the neighbourhood to be haunted ; now Captain Williams was a man of undaunted courage, and having no faith in ghost stories, and a resistless curiosity, he determined that very night to satisfy his mind respecting it.

“ He immediately departed from the inn, and arrived alone at the mansion which had caused the villagers so much alarm, he placed a brace of pistols on the table, and reclining on a chair near them, for once gave himself up to romantic ideas.

“ The clock struck twelve, no ghost appeared, and Captain Williams bragged of having already laid it, but his reveries were interrupted when the clock struck one, by a peal of thunder that shook the whole fabric : chains he now distinctly heard jing-

ling at a distance, and presently a pair of folding doors which Captain W. had not before observed, burst open ; and a figure in white, with a dagger in one hand and a lamp burning blue in the other, presented itself before him.

“ Captain Williams was so alarmed that he had not power to fire his already grasped pistol ; the figure frowned with a ghastly countenance and beckoned, Captain W. followed, and was led through several apartments and landing places ; the phantom waved his hand and vanished, leaving our hero in total darkness.

“ Still encouraged by his natural curiosity, he proceeded, when his foot slipped, and falling through a trap door, found himself surrounded by about forty men, whose aspects did by no means diminish his ap-

prehensions : they were of a savage appearance ; he was instantly seized and two of them, it was evident, were desirous of immediately dispatching him, but one, who seemed to have more authority than the rest, interposed, and addressed Captain Williams in the following words.

“ You have fallen into the hands of a company of coiners who are resolved to punish your rash curiosity, therefore instantly prepare for death, or become a member of our community.”

“ Captain Williams now heartily repented his entering the house, his courage forsook him and he trembled from head to foot : at length recovering himself, he said, “ I cannot possibly become one of your members, and though true that it is now in your power to take away my life, yet

“ should you commit an act so horrible, you will inevitably be brought to justice, for I am sent to the north on a special commission from the King, therefore, if I am missed, not a single corner in this house will be unsearched, but I will pledge myself as a man of honour, never to divulge the secret I have now to my cost discovered.”

“ After a long consultation between the coiners, during which Captain Williams’s consternation can be more easily imagined than described, his proposal was accepted, and he was released from his perilous situation.

“ Many years after this, as Captain Williams was giving a grand entertainment to a party of friends, his servant entered the drawing room and informed him that a tra-

veller below wished particularly to speak to him. Captain W. made an apology to his friends and went to the stranger, who to his great astonishment, proved to be the chief of the coiners, and he thus addressed him.

“ Our party being now dispersed, I am
“ desired by the community to present you
“ with a horse as a token of our gratitude
“ for your keeping a secret, which, had
“ you divulged, it would have proved highly
“ injurious to us.

“ You may therefore now return to your
“ friends, and relate your extraordinary
“ adventure to them.”

“ He accordingly returned to the drawing-room and informed his company, (of which I was one) of the foregoing in nearly the same words as you have now heard it from me.”

The gentleman's daughters were highly delighted with this curious incident, indeed they were just about that age which generally enters into narratives of a similar description to the last with peculiar eagerness and interest: my fare had now reached the village of Hammersmith, where I sat them down.

CHAP. XVII.

ON my return I observed two gentlemen on the road, who seemed by their eagerness in conversation to be engrossed in an interesting subject; they hailed me as I passed; just before they entered, some boys near were cudgelling, and one of the gentlemen seemed desirous to wait the issue or learn the cause of their quarrel and to assist the assailed party, but the other gentleman (being as I suppose in a hurry) told him "he had better leave them to fight."

“it out;” accordingly they got in, when the latter gentleman adduced to his friend the following historical case, (which he added perhaps he might have before read), in support of the advice he had just given.

“A certain old roman being come to Greece as pro-consul, assembled the philosophers at Athens, and offered to give his assistance in terminating their disputes, and effecting at last an unity in their sentiments; upon which they all agreed,” says Tully, “in laughing at him for his pains.”

“This was agreeable and no harm ensued, but it is far from having this end in general: to interfere with parties who dispute, (with whatsoever good intention), is always a nice and delicate affair, and, in-

stead of producing the service intended, is usually rewarded with abuse.

“ Pray neighbour do’nt beat your wife,” thus said the man in the play who humanely interposed, endeavouring to reason with a brutish husband, “ but,” says the wife turning short upon him, “ suppose, “ Sir, that I have a mind to be beat, what “ business is that of your’s ?” and thus the storm encreased ’till the poor peace-maker was fairly driven off.

“ These instances, continued the gentleman, are in my humble opinion not far distant from the point I set out at, and I cannot conclude my sentiments on this topic without observing, how strongly I am impressed with the idea that human nature, contemplated on a larger scale, shews itself precisely thus.”

“ I entirely agree with you,” observed his friend, though sometimes feel a sort of reluctance in keeping back when I might essentially benefit a part of my fellow creatures by stepping forward ; notwithstanding, having met with many obstacles and reproaches from the blindness and ignorance of those whom it has been my endeavour to assist in various ways, I must confess that I have for some time brought myself very much to your mode of thinking in this respect.

“ It has often been a matter of surprise to me, continued the gentleman, to perceive how busily some men are engaged in the various occupations of this life, which tend in their opinion, to improve their temporal concerns : how active are mortals in the pursuit of their own immediate enjoyments ! but if we were to ask ourselves

to what purpose our activity is employed, or of what use are our eagerness and haste in chase of mundane pleasures, I fear the only answer to be given would be that our designs for the most part produce vexation and are full of vanity : we please our imaginations with the supposition that we are achieving great exploits, while in reality we perform nothing,

“ *Multum agentes nihil agendo,*”
or in other words we are catching at a substance while we follow a shadow.

“ Is that,” continued the gentleman, “ the position ” (said the philosopher looking down contemptuously on the earth) “ is that the point which so many nations “ are petitioning with fire and sword ?

“ When Alcibiades was pleasing himself with his numerous farms and posses-

sions, Socrates drily asked to see them upon a map of the earth which was hanging before them: not unlike a grand Seignior, who, enquiring where England was which made so much disturbance, was desired to remove his thumb which hid it upon the map.

“ It is certain” (says Hume) “ were a superior being thrust into a human body, that the whole of life would appear so mean, contemptible, and puerile, that he never would be induced to take part in any thing.

“ A sound understanding well and honestly cultivated, and rightly and duly estimating what passes around him, may easily withhold a man from taking part in any thing: in short, life, as instituted and conducted by mankind in general, is all va-

nity, folly, and madness, our speculations nothing but a “Comedy of Errors,” our actions “Much ado about Nothing.”

I was much amused a short time since by the conversation of two gentlemen who were by profession surgeons; one of the gentlemen, (by far the other's senior,) was relating to his young friend, who I discovered to be his pupil, a singular incident which occurred to him in his younger days, and the remembrance of which even then raised a smile.

He began (if my memory fails me not) in the following words.

“When I was about your age, (addressing himself to his friend), being naturally of an enquiring turn, and possessing no little thirst after knowledge, I preferred ana-

to my much to the other branches of surgery, and consequently made that science my particular study.

“ It is repeating a fact of very ancient date, to inform you of the difficulty which exists for all the surgeons to gain an adequate knowledge of anatomy, by the handling and dissecting of dead bodies in their private rooms of study, but that difficulty was still greater in my younger days than at present, and very few of us were able (except at the public lectures, and these were usually so numerously attended, that few could obtain the beneficial knowledge expected, and which the skilful professors held forth to disseminate) to view distinctly the “ *humanum corpus* ” while being dissected.

“ I therefore used all my endeavours, and made inquiries amongst my intimate friends

in conducting him to my apartments, giving him at the same time the key to my outer room, where I told him to deposit his intemperate burthen.

“ The porter with my assistance effected the removal of the body from the coach without much difficulty, but, finding his charge not only incapable of standing but also wholly insensible, he was compelled to take his stupified load on his back, and the recompense offered for his labour being liberal, he did not hesitate in being of use to a fellow creature

“ Having discharged the coach, I kept at a short distance from the porter 'till I saw him ascend the steps leading to my chambers, and then waiting on the ground floor, heard him (while resting himself on the landing place) admonish his charge for his supposed intemperance.

“ Ah ! ” (said the porter, for I remember his words) “ I dare say you have a wife and family at home, what a pity it is, that such a fine tall gentleman as you are, should thus wilfully deprive yourself of your senses : I confess I sometimes take a drop too much, but have never been as far gone as you : come let me see if you can walk up the next flight,” added the porter placing him against the wall, but as he found he continued insensible, he put him on his back, and having reached my door unlocked it, and gladly releasing himself, fixed his burthen in a chair : but how great was his horror ! in discovering, on striking a light, and touching the hands of the supposed drunkard, that it was as cold as a stone, consequently he was aware that he had been carrying a corpse.

“ He ran screaming down stairs, and had I not luckily been at the bottom, and im-

mediately rewarded him handsomely for his trouble, and likewise explained the matter briefly to him, the result of my enterprise might have proved extremely unpleasant, but the fee instantaneously had a wonderful effect in pacifying the porter's mind, and restoring his former composure.

“ I then hinted the necessity of secrecy being enjoined, which I trusted he would for his own sake, be careful to observe, as, if the circumstance should by any means transpire, he the porter would be implicated in the transaction and considered as accessory thereto, and more especially so, as the premium I had given him would be a convincing proof of his connivance in the deed.

“ This mode of reasoning induced him to conceal the whole affair ; and besides,

the idea of losing my custom and recommendation, added no little weight to the preference the porter possessed, that the matter instead of being divulged should be hushed up."

CHAP. XIX.

THE operation of cleaning all parts of my coach I usually perform once a week, at which time I never fail to refreshen its inside by casting away the straw which has lost its cleanliness, and replace it with a proper quantity of that article which is in possession of its original freshness.

It was in this occupation that I was busily employed a short time back early in the morning, and, amongst the collected rub-

bish or refuse which I was about to discard from the coach, I discovered a paper containing the following lines, and having been recommended by a friend to preserve them, I now offer them for the public inspection, but which I should not have presumed to do, had they not been allowed by many, who are entitled to call themselves judges of poetry, a performance of some merit.

The subject being of general importance, will I trust afford both instruction and amusement.



OF THE USE AND ABUSE OF

Time.

“ O WHAT is life ! an airy blast,
Scarce felt in passing e'er 'tis past !
An empty shew, a shining bubble,
Made by some a world of trouble ;

Its course a little while it takes,
But touch it in its way it breaks ;
A toy to pleasure's youthful eyes
While light as vanity it flies.
It's date a breathing—space no more—
Scarce time to read an author o'er !
Then whither tends this toil and pain ?
Leave, leave behind this scribbling vein !
Whate'er your aim, 'tis ten to one,
You die before the work is done,
If then so light is human life,
Or rack'd with cares or rent with strife,
Say, whence immers'd in vain pursuit,
Do busy fools its worth compute ?
Give me, ye fools ! myself to please,
And while I live to live at ease :
Soft lolling in his elbow chair,
Sir Courtly thus express'd his pray'r,
Loose hose and night-cap on his head
Bespoke him but just rose from bed,
The clock struck twelve the breakfast hour,
Dinner was ordered just at four :
The constant paper of the day
Engag'd his honour to the play,
The stage Athenian Timon grac'd,
Timon's politeness hit his taste :

The useless time from ten 'till two,
To supper and the glass was due.
Drunk with the dire Circean charm,
Nor hopes sustain nor fears alarm,
With ease and riot night and day
Thus glide insensibly away ;
As streams their destin'd passage steer,
Regardless of the weight they bear,
O fatal ease, how dearly bought !
Thou foe to virtue and to thought ;
Infatuated men for thee,
From every point of glory flee,
The paths of genuine honor shun,
And idly wish to be undone !
But now if this be fact what you
Aver, Sir Courtly, to be true—
If life indeed is but a blast,
Each moment's value then how vast !
How base to trample on, nor own
The precious gem beneath you thrown ;
Time is a treasure to the wise,
Who strain to catch it as it flies,
To such a sum to purchase heav'n,
Who make the most of what is giv'n,

Nor is that life with which you sport,
So very frail or very short,
But wild intemperance and sloth,
Sadly conjoin'd have made it both ;
At twelve you stir : the radiant sun
To you eight hours in vain hath shone ;
To you, whose unenquiring eyes
Ne'er saw his glorious body rise,
Thus twice five hours by sleep ingross'd,
Eleven in self-indulgence lost,
Leave only three, O vile abuse !
In twenty-four for your real use.
Improve your arithmetic pow'rs,
And count them years instead of hours,
To real life you so consign
In seventy-two no more than nine ;
Then coughing, puling, panting, dying,
Desire to live when life is flying.
If then no lasting works appear
To say the wise or good was here,
No learning grieves a patron flown,
No country mourns a patriot gone,
No christian tears devoutly shed,
Embalm the mem'ry of the dead,

No poor bedew the well-known gate,
But all forgotten falls : too late
You'll find this observation true,
The fault was not in life—but you."

CHAP. XX.



THE conversation of the gentlemen who had now taken possession of my coach did not long permit me to remain ignorant of their occupations, for after a reciprocal expression of good fortune at the unexpected meeting, and both of them having exhausted the usual topics of discourse, viz. the weather, and the times, the elder gentleman, who I found to be Mr. Shroud, an eminent undertaker, addressed his Cousin, Doctor M'Lotion, as follows.

“ My dear doctor I am so glad to find
“ you are in town, and to have this oppor-
“ tunity of speaking to you upon a subject
“ most interesting, but at the same time
“ grievous to me, which is the decrease of
“ burials ; indeed, if you will believe me,
“ my poor tender heart is almost broken,
“ the newspapers of this day have nearly
“ made me mad : can you believe the sor-
“ rowful intelligence they communicate !—
“ Decreased in burials last week forty-two,
and this seventy-five !” “ and which decre-
“ ment has been the case ever since you
“ left town : my good Doctor consider,
“ though you have filled your own coffers,
“ your poor old cousin, Shroud, is starv-
“ ing ; all tradesmen must live, and how
“ can that be unless others die ? unassisted
“ ed nature, you must, cousin, be aware,
“ will never employ a thousandth part of
“ our business.”

He was proceeding on this subject with much feeling and energy, when his attention was suddenly taken by seeing a little smart dapper fellow, with a gold headed cane in his hand, tripping along seemingly in a pleasant mood, and to whom Mr. Shroud nodded : " who may that be ? " says Doctor M'Lotion, " bless us and " save us," replies Shroud, " don't you " know Harry Dosewell, the apothecary, " as honest a little creature as ever felt a " pulse, indeed I must speak of that soci- " ety in general as a considerate mass of " beings, and who without doubt have the " interest of persons in my line much at " heart ; but they can't go on with half " the vigour they were accustomed to do " when aided by your prescriptions, which " finished affairs at a blow, and were infal- " lible mittimuses to the other world."

Here Shroud was again interrupted in consequence of a crowd in the street, which obliged me to stop : for the multitude had assembled to view the famous Don Cossack just arrived from Russia ; the two gentlemen therefore took the same opportunity of observing this novel spectacle and were highly gratified not only with the curiosity of his habiliments, but also with his robust form, and, though the undertaker could not help remarking that the foreigner would make a charming corpse, yet he wished the hero might live to assist in completing the great and glorious work he and his comrades had so successfully begun.

The crowd now dispersed, and I proceeded towards Piccadilly, where the gentleman had ordered me to draw up : after a pause, "my dear friend," said the doctor, (the relationship of second cousin accord-

ing to his idea being no small a remove),
“ though I am well satisfied with what I
“ have obtained by my professional labors,
“ yet I should not so soon have quitted my
“ profession, had not ill health for some
“ time compelled me to lead a retired life
“ in the country, and bestow the care and
“ advice, which I was in the habit of so
“ widely extending, entirely upon my-
“ self.

“ Respecting the decay of your trade,”
continued the Doctor, “ I must observe
“ that your imputation of its cause with
“ regard to myself is certainly erroneous,
“ but the facetious and pleasant manner
“ you shewed in giving your opinion, is a
“ sufficient apology and proves that you
“ had no desire to offend: still I beg leave to
“ add that the cause of the decreint of your
“ trade may in a great measure be ascribed

“ to the introduction of vaccination, which
“ is a most desirable preventive of the
“ small-pox, a disorder at one time so fatal
“ to thousands of this metropolis.”

Just as the Doctor had closed his speech I stopped, and the gentlemen, (shaking each other by the hand), having paid the fare departed to their respective places of appointment.

The fineness of the weather on the following morning made me almost despair of getting a fare, when I perceived three gentlemen standing together on the foot pavement, the youngest of whom said to the person next him, “ Father why wont that coach do” pointing at mine, “ it seems as new as our’s,” upon hearing this I took the hint, drove up, and the gentlemen got in.

They had scarcely seated themselves when one of the elder gentlemen, taking

the other by the hand, said “my dear old
“ friend Bramble you cannot think how
“ glad I am to see you, it must be upwards
“ of twenty years since our last meeting :
“ no small space of time has elapsed since
“ we were students at Cambridge together,
“ but notwithstanding perhaps you may
“ remember our gallops over Gog Magog
“ Hills,” “aye my good Process, to be
“ sure I do” replies the other, “ I was then
“ mightily fond of horse exercise and was
“ considered a tolerably good horseman,
“ and indeed have not forgot all about it
“ now, but son Dicky,” (pointing at the
young gentleman), “beats me at a chase,
“ and so he should, he is the youngest, and
“ every dog has his day, ha ! ha ! ha !” “I
“ find” says the other, “you are as merry
“ as you used to be.” “To be sure” re-
turned Bramble, “what should ail me?
“ I am independent and do as I please.”

“ I have understood,” said his friend, “ that you have lately become possessed of a capital estate in Yorkshire, and I beg leave therefore to congratulate you on the pleasing event.” “ Process, I thank you,” replied Mr. Bramble, “ it is very true.” “ Now pray what family have you?” said the other ; “ though I have had a large family,” answered Bramble, “ Dicky (who is the eldest) has nearly as good a fortune as myself, which was left him by his aunt, indeed he deserved it, for he was with her from four years old to the day of her death.” “ But who educated him?” asked his friend, “ Oh ! as for the matter of that (returned Bramble) neither his aunt nor he ever possessed a great partiality for books, and I did not think it prudent to meddle for fear of affronting her, so he only got a little learning now and then from Mr. Humdrum, the carter, but for all that he is a sharp lad,

“ and though only twenty-two last Candlemas, knows already how to manage the Yorkshire Tits, and is as good a fox-hunter as any in the county. He will in all probability be Sheriff next year, in that case I have no doubt he will manage matters very well, and if he be fortunate, may pick up a girl with a few thousands which by the bye is more than his father did.

“ My good friend Process” (continued Mr. Bramble), “ I think you told me you studied the law, and if so, must be a little acquainted with the business attached to the office of sheriffs. Do have the kindness to instruct Dicky about this matter, as I should like him to appear before my Lord Judge, as if his breeding and education had not been amiss.” “ That I will with a great deal of pleasure,” replied Mr. Process, who turning round to the young gentleman,

began to address him, but before he had uttered two words the young man called out "do look out of the window, vather, " and put your head to the right and you " will see such a sunart gentleman in such " an odd looking carriage, drawn by horses " so curiously ornamented, and with cock- " a-doodles for his postilions."

" Oh ! " says Mr. Process, " that is the fa-
" mous Mr. C——, the Amateur of Fashion,
" whom you have heard so much talk of, he
" is quite a curiosity, his comic powers are
" extremely remarkable, if not for excel-
" lence certainly for a singularity of stile;
" which he observes through the whole of
" his performance on the stage : But, I
" should be far from doing justice to the
" gentleman I am commenting on, were I
" to omit acquainting you with the motives
" which induce him to subject himself to
" the ridicule of critics, and expose his

“ person in so public a situation ; they are
“ indeed truly laudable and what the
“ most rigid censor cannot disapprove :
“ in aid of the unfortunate and distressed
“ his talents have been most successfully
“ applied ; he sought no reward for his la-
“ bours, but the relief of others was the
“ highest gratification he could receive,”

“ Lack-a-dazy ! I am glad I have seen
“ him,” replied the young man, “ I wish I
“ could have him at our town during our
“ Assizes, as I should get a mint of money
“ by shewing him for a sight.” “ Never
“ mind such trifles” (says Mr. Bramble)
“ but attend to what my friend will tell you
“ as to your behaviour when you become
“ Sheriff.”

A pause of about a minute having elap-
sed, Mr. Process began as follows.

“ Every Sheriff, you know, must have his
attendants, or javelin-men, to ride before him

with their pikes to clear the way, and these persons I think you should choose out of your principal tenants, and clothe them with the dress of the county, which, if it should not sooth your own pride, cannot fail to debase and humble them : the morning before you go to meet my Lord Judge, get your retinue home, and make your attendants all drunk, they will doubtless in that case be taken the more notice of.

“ When you are come within sight of my Lord Judge, you are to look as wise as possible, and as much like the rest of the family of the fox-hunters as you can : bow to the Judge several times, and whenever you happen to say, “ Sir,” (which will be often the case) be sure to make a great many apologies for not saying, “ my Lord.”

“ Your first topic or subject of discourse (for a subject of discourse and a to-

pic of discourse are synonymous), should be about the weather : you may say it is fine weather, (should it fortunately be so) and my Lord will in all probability answer, “ yes, Mr. Sheriff, it is :” then you may say it is very fine weather, and after that exceedingly fine weather, and by and bye that 'tis a fine day and a good day for hunting, and then you have the fairest opportunity in the world for entering into the history of a fox chase, which, if told in a proper manner, including in it all the interesting incidents peculiar to that diversion, will very well hold out to the assembly. }

“ But in this narration you are not to suffer yourself to be interrupted, nor to give place to any other speaker, but preserve solely for yourself the thread of your discourse as long as possible ; and, if you should find yourself so happy as not to have finished it that night, re-assume it on the following morning at your first meeting.

“ The morning the trials commence you would do well to be visiting your friends, and thereby oblige the Court to wait; this will give you the air of a man of consequence; it will be prudent also to drink pretty freely before you go into Court, in order that you may be ripe for a nap.

“ Though the goddess Fortune alone is deprived of sight, still I am not aware that the acquirement of justice is likely to be impeded or delayed by your indulgence in an innocent slumber, or that you can better express your impartiality than by falling asleep.

“ If by the noise of the crier of the Court, or any other noise, you happen to be disturbed and awakened out of your nap, you are then to take your tobacco-box from your pocket, replenishing your mouth with a large quid which will cause a pro-

jection in your cheek and add dignity to your whole face: if you have a mind to shew yourself the perfectly polite gentleman, you may, while your box is out, compliment his Lordship.

“ It sometimes happens that a cause is intricate, that it can’t conveniently be determined so as for the Court to adjourn at the hour appointed for dinner, and in this case you may inform the Judge, in a loud whisper, so as to be heard by the whole Court, that the haunch will be spoiled, and will not be worth his Lordship’s eating; you may also add, if opportunity offers, that to you the prisoner’s guilt seems evident, and be cautious not to part with the authority you may conceive yourself to be possessed of.

“ If the prisoner should have on a dirty shirt and a long beard, (which may happen

to a man who has lain long in jail and has no money), I think you may safely tell him that he looks like a rogue, and that you have too high an esteem for truth for a moment to suspect that it ever appeared in such sordid apparel, and that you never sullied your sublime notions of that virtue, by uniting them with the paltry ideas of poverty and distress.

“After such a delivery of your sentiments, no one will fail to admire your wisdom and penetration.

“These are all the observations which I think necessary to make to a young gentleman of your discrimination, and hope you will find them of use.”

Here Mr. Process stopped, and Dicky whose eyes and mouth were wide open, and had been so during the whole time, to take

all in, nodded his head and said “thank ye “Sir,” whilst Mr. Bramble appeared by his words most grateful for his friend’s advice, and said he had no doubt of his son’s remembering every tittle of it.”

The check-string being now pulled, I was under the necessity of setting down my fare at Grosvenor-Gate, and saw them all walk into Hyde Park.

The greater part of my readers must be aware, and experience will doubtless inform that portion of them, which includes those persons moving in higher spheres, whose exalted stations in life and happy circumstances enable them to enjoy the convenient luxury of a carriage, that the time will come when those agreeable means of conveyance, in consequence of long standing and much service, must be supplied by those vehicles which have per-

formed less work and are of fresher materials and more modern structure : it is with no little regret that I now state that my coach, which has so long prevailed on account of its elegance and easy motion, has at length reached this woeful period.

To add to my distress, my coachmaker has informed me that the frame of the coach, (so long a favorite with the public), is not sufficiently strong to undergo another substantial repair ; and, as it would be with still greater reluctance that I should be unnecessarily compelled to lay aside a vehicle so universally admired, I shall withdraw awhile and take leave of my readers to make further inquiries ; and if the result of them should prove that a new coach is absolutely requisite, to render the safety of my passengers undoubted, it will then be my pride and endeavour to take

care that no expence shall be spared, and no time lost in procuring one as similar as can be, to that which has long been favoured with so distinguished a preference.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

PAGE, 12, Instead of *you* read *your*
19, *Group* not *groupe*
70, Read " *though a painful &c.*"
79, Instead of *you* read *your*
100, Instead of *and* read *an*
120, Instead of *petitioning* read *partitioning*
134, Read " *for real use*"
147, Instead of " *the dress of the County*" read " *your
own livery*."





